



City of Santa Barbara
Planning Division

Memorandum

DATE: February 6, 2018

TO: Historic Landmarks Commission

FROM: Nicole Hernandez, City Urban Historian

SUBJECT: City Landmark, 34 West Mission Street, Flying A Studio,

PROJECT:

Proposal to convert the residential/commercial space into an entirely business occupancy.

Proposal to remove the garage to accommodate three of the five parking spaces required by zoning, one of which is ADA accessible. Proposal to request a modification to reduce the required parking spaces from five spaces to three spaces in order to preserve the character-defining spatial relationship of the historic building, exterior garden walls, garden and pergola.

Proposal also includes replacing landings to match color and material as existing path for accessibility codes at existing entries and installing wrought iron accessibility code compliant handrails at exterior stairs that match the HLC pre-approved handrails.

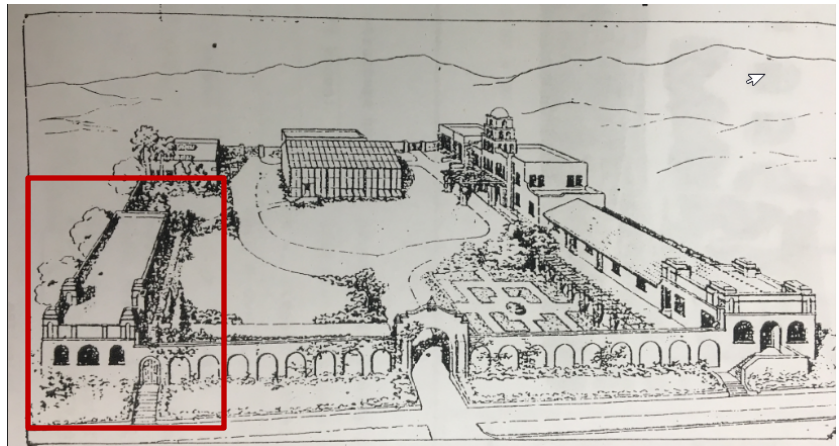


The Urban Historian evaluates small projects proposed on historic resources by determining if a project clearly meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The purpose of this staff evaluation is to assist the Historic Landmarks Commission in the review of a project when the Urban Historian has not required an Historic Structures/Sites Report (HSSR).

Evaluation Comments

History from 1998 City

Landmark Report: The Flying A Studio is the remaining portion of Santa Barbara's only major motion picture studio, the American Film Manufacturing Company called "Flying A". Architect J. Corbley Pool designed the Mission Revival style studio with 12 structures in 1913. Pool arranged the complex of buildings around the garden. The inner courtyard gardens, walkways and pergolas evoked the tranquility of a wealthy estate. The studio produced 600 Western movies and by 1916 was the second largest film making operation in the country. Developers demolished all of the other buildings of the studio in 1948. The Mission Revival style building and its walkway, garden and pergola at 34 West Mission is the only remaining, externally unaltered portion of the film studio.



Original site plan of Flying A studios with remaining building and garden walk and wall in red.

The garage on the site was specifically excluded from the 1998 City Landmark Designation in the Resolution 98-144 as it was altered and not a character-defining feature of the site and not historically significant to the site. Because the garage is not historic, the garage can be demolished for additional parking without a Historic Structures Sites Report. The proposed three spaces for the parking and accessible van parking will not have a negative impact on the resource as the proposal retains a buffer of landscaping between the parking and the 100 year old pergola, walkway, garden and Mission Revival building. However, the historic site cannot support five spaces required by zoning as five spaces would impact the character defining garden, pergola and historic building. As Transportation staff support retaining the existing vehicular gate on Chapala Street, there will be no visible alterations on the street elevation to the resource. As per the Urban Historian evaluation below, the proposed project meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of a Historic Resource as no historic resources are impacted by the project. The required five spaces by zoning would not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards as noted below. No Historic Structure/Sites Report is required for the proposal or the modification request to reduce the required parking from five spaces to three spaces as the modification request would encourage rehabilitation of the resource, whereas meeting the five space requirement would actually negatively impact the historic resource. The reduction of the zoning requirement to three spaces would facilitate the preservation of the historic resources.



Non-historic garage proposed for demolition

Evaluation to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.

Proposed three parking spaces: The site will continue to be used as commercial space, it originally was the dressing rooms and waiting rooms and lounge for the actors and extras. The proposed three spaces requires minimal change to the character defining features of the original studio offices, garden and pergola. The garage was eliminated from the City Landmark designation as it was found not to be historically significant. The parking in place of the garage will not require changes to the portion of the site that is historically significant, however will allow the property to facilitate an accessible van parking space.

Five parking spaces required by zoning:

The site will not accommodate the five spaces required by zoning without encroaching into the historic spatial relationship of the garden, pergola and Mission Revival style building and does not meet Standard 1.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Proposed three parking spaces: All character defining features of the building and the garden and their spatial relationship will be retained and preserved and no distinctive materials or alterations will be made to features or spaces that characterize the property.

Five parking spaces required by zoning: The site will not accommodate the five spaces required by zoning without encroaching into the historic spatial relationship of the garden, pergola and Mission Revival style building and does not meet Standard 2.



Vehicular gates to Chapala Street.



Historic pergola that covers one of the garden walkways that are a character defining feature of the site.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

Proposed three parking spaces: The removal of the non-historic garage and proposed three parking spaces in the rear of the lot will allow the historic building, garden and pergola to remain a physical record of its time, place, and use and no conjectural features are proposed for this project.

Five parking spaces required by zoning: The site will not accommodate the five spaces required by zoning without encroaching into the historic spatial relationship of the garden, pergola and Mission Revival style building and does not meet Standard 3.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

Proposed three parking spaces: No changes are proposed to the historic Flying A Mission Revival building, the garden or pergola. The City Landmark designation report found the garage has been so altered it is not significant to the site and the designation excluded the garage from the designation, it has not acquired any significance in its own right.

Five parking spaces required by zoning: The site will not accommodate the five spaces required by zoning without encroaching into the historic spatial relationship of the garden, pergola and Mission Revival style building and does not meet Standard 4.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Proposed three parking spaces: All of the historically significant Flying A Mission Revival building, garden and pergola will be preserved for this project.

Five parking spaces required by zoning: To accommodate five parking spaces, the distinctive garden and pergola will have to be altered and will not be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Not applicable for this scope of work as all of the historically significant Flying A Mission Revival building, garden and pergola will be preserved for this project.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

Not applicable for this scope of work as all of the historically significant Flying A Mission Revival building, garden and pergola will be preserved for this project.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Not applicable for this proposal.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Proposed three parking spaces: The three new parking spaces provided to meet zoning and accessibility requirements will not destroy any historic materials, features or spatial relationships. They will be adequately separated from the historic building and garden so they will not have a negative impact on the spatial relationship of the site. The three parking spaces proposed meets Standard 9.

Landings and Wrought Iron Railings: Proposal also includes replacing landings for accessibility codes at existing entries and installing wrought iron accessibility code compliant handrails at exterior stairs.

The concrete landings will match the existing color and texture of the existing path and wrought iron railings are compatible the historic resource and match the HLC approved handrail detail. This meets Standard 9.

Five parking spaces required by zoning: To accommodate five parking spaces, the distinctive garden and pergola and historic spatial relationship, that characterizes the property, will have to be altered and will not be preserved and this does not meet Standard 9.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Proposed three parking spaces: The new parking spaces provided to meet zoning and accessibility requirements will not destroy any historic materials, features or spatial relationships. They will be adequately separated from the historic building and garden, so they will not have a negative impact on the spatial relationship of the site. If removed, the essential form and integrity of the building, garden and pergola will remain unimpaired.

Five parking spaces required by zoning: To accommodate five parking spaces, the setting of the Flying A studios with the historic garden and pergola behind the original wall and original Mission Revival building would be altered and if removed, the original historic materials would not be lost. If the parking were removed in the future the essential form and integrity would be permanently impaired.

Conclusion: The reduction in required parking to three spaces will facilitate the preservation of the City Landmark as there will be adequate separation between the historic garden, the historic pergola, the historic resource and the parking. The proposal not only meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, the proposal will enhance the historic resource to be more accessible for people with disabilities without altering the character defining features of the site.